



## CHAPTER 10

### OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

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The Open Space and Recreation Element of the Costa Mesa 2000 General Plan outlines a strategy to preserve open space areas in the City and to meet the recreational needs of residents. Open space in Costa Mesa includes neighborhood and community parks, community centers, open space easements and golf courses. There are also County-owned regional facilities within and adjacent to the City limits and a large amount of institutional land. The total inventory of open space and recreation land comprises approximately 20 percent of the total land area of the City.

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is the primary implementation tool for the goals, objectives and policies included within the Open Space and Recreation Element of the 2000 General Plan. The Master Plan includes a more detailed analysis of the community's current and long-range open space and recreation needs, establishes priorities for meeting these needs and identifies a range of implementation measures.

#### 10.1 PURPOSE

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The Open Space and Recreation Element fulfills the requirements of Section 65302(e) of the Government Code which requires that General Plans include an Open Space Element. Recreation Elements are an optional element of the general plan pursuant to Section 65303 of the Government Code. Open space lands and uses can be defined in relation to the functions which these lands serve and to the benefits derived from the use of these lands. Section 65560(b) of the Government Code identifies four specific definitions of open space uses:

- (1) *Open space for the preservation of natural resources including, but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species; areas required for ecologic and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lake shores, banks of rivers and streams, and watershed lands.*

- (2) *Open space used for the managed production of resources, including but not limited to, forest lands, range land, agricultural lands and areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber; areas required for recharge of ground water basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply.*
- (3) *Open space for outdoor recreation, including but not limited to, areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lake shores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors.*
- (4) *Open space for public health and safety, including, but not limited to, areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.*

Examples of each of these open space uses can be found in Costa Mesa. In some instances, an individual open space facility may perform a variety of functions. For example, Fairview Park preserves and upgrades an existing wildlife habitat, provides outdoor recreational uses, protects a significant archaeological site and provides a compatible use with flood and geologic hazards associated with the lowlands adjacent to the Santa Ana River.

## **10.2 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS**

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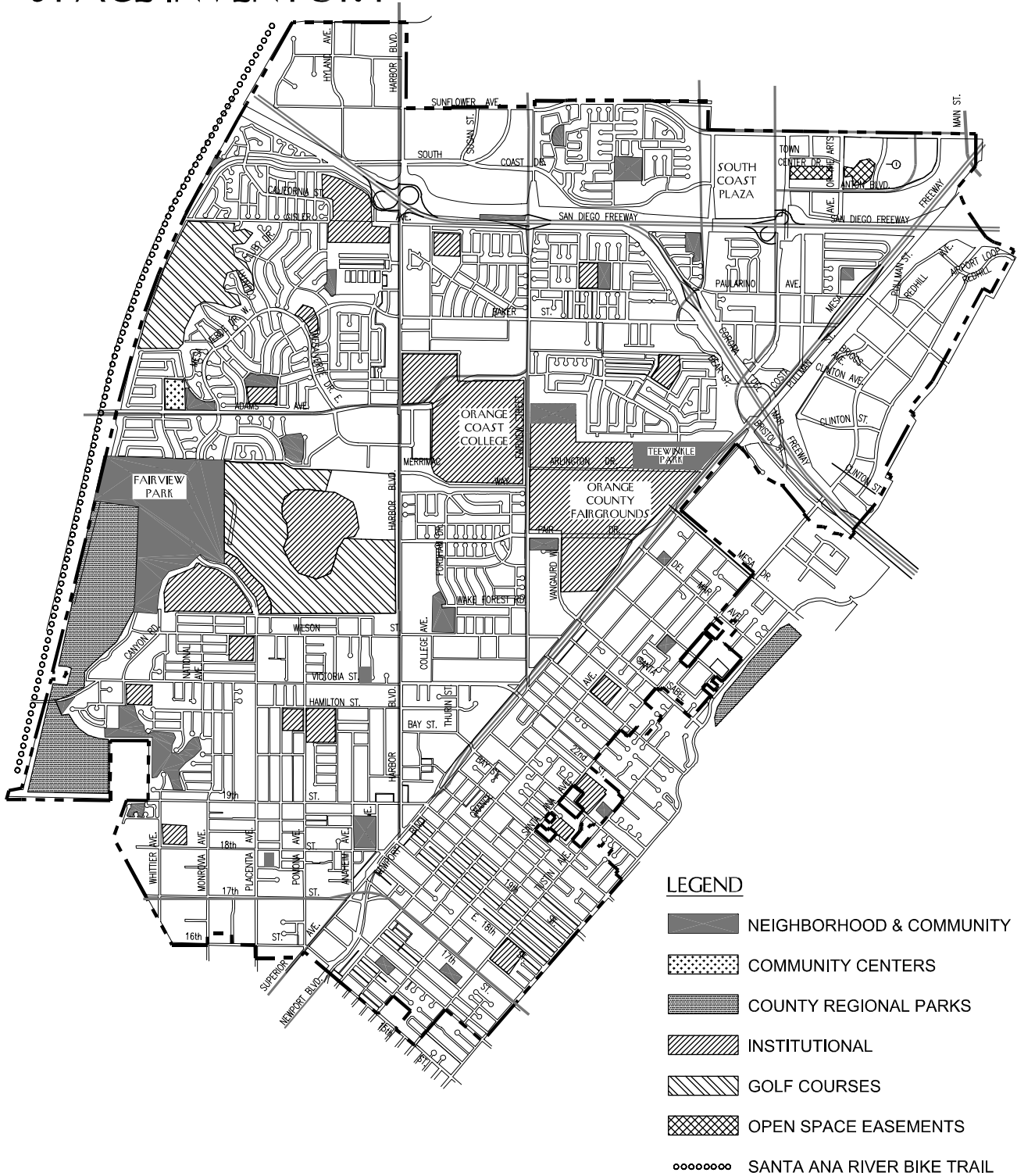
The policies of the Open Space and Recreation Element are directly related to the policies within the land use and conservation elements. The goals, policies, standards and proposals within the Open Space and Recreation Element are consistent with all other elements of the Costa Mesa 2000 General Plan.

## **10.3 EXISTING OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

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Costa Mesa's inventory of open space and recreation opportunities includes a diversity of facilities, ranging from highly developed, active recreation sites to low activity, passive open spaces. The existing network of open space and recreation facilities is illustrated in Exhibit OSR-Parks, *Recreation and Open Space Inventory*, and inventoried in Table OSR-1, *Open Space Inventory*.

# PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY



Source: Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, September 1999

SCALE: 1"=4500'

EXHIBIT OSR-1

**TABLE OSR-1  
OPEN SPACE INVENTORY**

<b>Type of Facility</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Neighborhood and Community Parks	410.38
Community Centers	9.97
Regional Nature Preserve	211.00
Institutional Uses	696.20
Open Space Easements	6.19
Golf Courses	373.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,706.74</b>

While it is recognized that not all of the institutional uses are readily available for public recreational uses, this inventory is considerable and offers a wide variety of opportunities and benefits to the residents of the community. The following sections provide a more detailed description of the various components of the community's open space and recreation inventory.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARKS**

The backbone of the community's local open space network is the neighborhood and community park system. Currently, the 410.38 acres of parkland comprise approximately 24 percent of the total inventory. This acreage is spread between 27 sites, ranging in size from 0.16 acres to 211 acres. The largest community park owned by the City of Costa Mesa is the 211-acre Fairview Park, while the smallest city owned park consists of 0.16 acres at the Shalimar Pocket Park location. Table OSR-2 identifies the size of each park site and provides an inventory of the number and type of recreation facilities provided.

### **COMMUNITY CENTERS**

The Balearic Community Center serves as a neighborhood or community park and has traditionally been included in the inventory of the local park system. While comprising only 1.5 percent of the total inventory, it does provide significant opportunities for active recreation facilities in addition to its existing social service and community recreation programs. Table OSR-2 also lists the type of recreation facilities provided at the community centers. The other community center is included in the Lions Park area as a community park.

### **REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES**

County-owned Regional Recreation Facilities includes 211 acres (approximately 12 percent of the total inventory) of passive open space in the southwest corner of the City along the Santa Ana River lowlands. The Talbert Nature Reserve will combine with the City's Canyon and Fairview Parks to provide a unique linkage of restored and enhanced natural environments totaling over 450 acres when completed.

**TABLE OSR-2  
OPEN SPACE AND PARK FACILITY MATRIX**

Open Space and Park Sites	Acreage	Baseball	Softball	Soccer Field	Utility Field	Basketball	Playground	Tennis Courts	Handball	Volleyball	Par Course	Picnic Tables	Shelter	Restrooms	Cooking Facilities	Parking Stalls	Drinking Fountain	Sinks	Fire Ring	Stand Seating	Bleacher	Amphitheater	Lake	Gazebo	Walking Trails	Pool
Brentwood	1.45						1			1		3	1		2	•	1									
Canyon	35						1																		1	
Civic Ctr. Park	2.49											1														
Civic Center	9.48																									
Community Garden	.5																									
Del Mesa	2.46				1	1	1			1		8	1	1	2	•	1	2								
Estancia	10											4		1		47	1									
Fairview	Dev 11 Undv 200				1											102									1	
Farm Sports Park	18			6																						
Gisler	3.15						1			1		2	1			10	1		1							
Harper	1						1					2				•										
Heller	2.61				1		1					3	1	1		•	3	2								
Lindbergh	1						1					2				•	1	1								
Lions	12.61						1		6			23	1	1	1	99	2	2		470						1
Marina View	2.29				1		1					4	2			•	1									
Mesa Verde	2.66						1					4	1			•										
Paularino	2.23						1			1		2	2			–										
Pinkley	2.58				1		1					10				•	1		1							
Smallwood	3.38		1			1	1			1		3		1		•	1									
Shalimar	.16						1																			
Shiffer	6.72				1	1	2		2	2	1	6	1	1		21	1									
Moon	1.2						1					4				8	1									
Suburbia II	0.6																									
Tanager	7.42				1	1	1			2	1	2				•	1									
TeWinkle	44.67	1	2		1		1	12		1	1	22	2	3		109	4				1	1	1	1		
Maple St. Park	.5																									
Vista	6.02				1		1					10		1	1	12	1									
Wakeham	9.91			1	1	1	1			1	1	10	3	1	2	24	1		3							
Willard T. Jordan	2.48				1		1					2	1			•	1	2								
Wilson	3.45						1			1		4	1	1	2	•	1									
Wimbledon	3.36				1	1	1				1	7				•	1									
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>410.38</i>																									
<b>Community Centers:</b>																										
Balearic	9.97			2	1	2	2		2			2				32	2									
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>420.35</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

• = Street

– = None

Another major regional open space feature which will be available to Costa Mesa residents (but not included in the above inventory) is the 140-acre Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve, to be developed east of the City limits along Irvine Avenue, south of University Drive. Actual components include the Peter and Mary Math Interpretive Center, trails and habitat stabilization and enhancement areas.

The Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks (FHBP) a non-profit, charitable California corporation organized in 1997 to promote the protection, expansion and enhancement of regional recreation and open space facilities in Orange County, currently proposed the implementation of the Orange Coast River Park (OCRP). OCRP is envisioned as a coordinated mosaic of the publicly owned and future anticipated dedications of parks and open space along the Santa Ana River between the Mesa Verde residential community and the Pacific Ocean. These properties include the following:

- ◆ Costa Mesa's Fairview Park,
- ◆ The County's Talbert Nature Preserve,
- ◆ The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers restored/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administered ecological reserve,
- ◆ The lands to be dedicated in conjunction with the entitlement of West Newport Oil Company/Taylor-Woodrow Company development project on the remnant Banning Ranch property,
- ◆ The former Pacific Coast Freeway lands declared surplus by Caltrans (between Superior and the West Newport Oil Company property),
- ◆ The Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy parcel located between Brookhurst and Beach Boulevard.

Altogether, these lands comprise approximately 1,000 acres in the central Orange County coastal area, surrounded by a highly urbanized area with a general deficit of public parks and open space.

## **INSTITUTIONAL USES**

The inventory of institutional land uses is as varied as the entire open space and recreation inventory. Institutional uses included in this category include public and private school sites, the Orange County Fair and Exposition Center and Harbor Lawn Cemetery. When the specific use (i.e., cemetery) or ownership (i.e., Vanguard University) precludes use of these sites for public recreation, they still provide the benefits of visual open space or relief from typical urban development patterns. This category is the largest component of the open space inventory, approximately 41 percent.

Schools and colleges make up nearly three-fourths of the total inventory of institutional uses (506.52 acres). Because these facilities often provide local and community level recreation needs when not in use during school hours, they play a critical role in the citywide open space and recreation inventory. These facilities can augment those provided by the neighborhood and community system and can combine, through formal joint-use agreements, to meet the overall open space and recreation needs of the community. The type and range of recreation facilities provided by each of the schools and colleges is identified in Table OSR-3.

**TABLE OSR-3  
SCHOOL FACILITY MATRIX**

Public Schools	Acreage	Baseball	Softball	Soccer Field	Turf Area	Basketball	Multi-Use Courts	Track	Play Equipment	Climbing Apparat.	Handball	Volleyball	Tennis	Swimming Pool
Adams School	10.00			•		•								
Back Bay High School	6.00		•	•	•	•								
California School	10.00		•	•(2)	•	•	•		•	•	•			
College Park School	8.00		•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•(2)			
Costa Mesa High School	67.00	•(4)	•	•(3)	•	•	•	•			•		•(8)	•
Davis Intermediate	19.00				•	•		•						
Estancia High School	40.00	•(2)	•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•(8)	•
Harper School/Newport Mesa Support Services	2.11			•(2)	•	•	•					•		
Woodland Elementary School	10.00	•		•		•			•		•			
Kaiser School	18.00	•(2)		•(3)	•	•	•	•		•				
Killybrooke School	10.00			•	•	•				•	•			
Lindbergh School	9.20				•	•	•			•	•			
Mesa Verde School	3.00				•									
Parsons School	10.00				•									
Paularino School	9.00				•	•	•			•	•			
Pomona School	7.00			•	•	•	•			•	•			
Rea School	10.00													
Sonora School	10.00				•	•	•			•	•			
TeWinkle Inter. School	30.00	•(3)	•(2)	•(3)	•	•(4)		•				•		
Victoria School	7.00			•	•	•	•			•				
Whittier	9.00		•		•		•		•	•	•			
Wilson	9.00				•		•			•				
Woodland School	9.00				•	•	•			•				
<b>Colleges:</b>														
Coastline Community	9.97		•		•		•							
Orange Coast	20.00	•	•	•	•			•			•(indoor)		•(12)	•
Vanguard University	13.90	•	•	•				•						
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>366.18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3</b>

## **OPEN SPACE EASEMENT**

While comprising the smallest portion of the total open space inventory (0.4 percent), the two existing open space easements provide significant open space benefits because of their location in the most densely developed section of the City. The 2.9-acre easement within Town Center provides a grassy, park-like, open space feature which bisects the development in an east-west direction. The Lakes easement (3.29 acres) provides a more urban feel of hardscape and an open water element which unifies the individual components of this mixed use area.

## **GOLF COURSES**

The two golf courses within the City provide the final 22 percent of the total citywide open space inventory. The courses include the public Costa Mesa Golf and Country Club (238 acres) and the private Mesa Verde Country Club (136 acres). An additional 129 acres of private golf course area is provided by the Santa Ana Country Club, located outside of existing City limits but within the City's sphere of influence.

## **BIKEWAYS**

Although not included in the open space inventory, the City's bikeway network is a significant recreation facility. The network includes a series of local bike lanes, routes and trails as well as the regional Santa Ana River Bike Trail. The bikeway system provides access between a majority of the existing local open space and recreation sites and opportunities to access surrounding regional facilities, especially local beaches. Bikeways also offer opportunities for an alternate transportation mode for commuters.

## **10.4 KEY ISSUES**

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The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan analyses the service area of existing neighborhood and community parks and public schools, the availability of vacant land and potential surplus school sites to meet future open space and recreation needs, and a recreation facility needs assessment and siting analysis. The following is a summary of the analysis.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARK SERVICE AREAS**

The effectiveness of a local park network is based on a number of factors. These include the number and size of parks, the type of facilities offered and the level of maintenance provided. Other key factors include the distribution of parks throughout the community and the level to which all areas of the City are served. The degree to which the latter factors are effective can be analyzed in two ways. One is to compare the amount of park acreage provided against an established service standard, such as the current park dedication standard of 4.26 acres per 1,000 population. While this is an important yardstick to attain citywide, it is also necessary to look at how well the various subareas and neighborhoods within the larger City context are being served. Currently, the service area for neighborhood parks two acres or larger is one-half mile. The service area for neighborhood parks is less than two acres and for pocket parks is one-quarter mile.



The service levels discussed above must be modified in some cases to reflect the impact of major barriers which hinder access. For Costa Mesa these barriers are limited to freeways and major arterials. For the purposes of this study, it was assumed that no service boundary would cross a major barrier, such as the freeways or Newport Boulevard, and that service boundaries crossing arterials which carry daily volumes in excess of 20,000 vehicles would be reduced by 50 percent.

A spatial analysis confirmed that the areas of good and poor community park services coincide with the age of residential neighborhoods, with the newer areas being better served than the older areas, shown Exhibit OSR-2, *Neighborhood Planning Areas With Park Service*. This is largely the result of the correlation of development timing with increasing awareness of the need to preserve long-term open space opportunities and code requirements for park dedications or the payment of in-lieu fees from new residential subdivisions to acquire parkland as the City's resident population increases.

### **SCHOOL SERVICE AREAS**

As local public school sites do act as neighborhood park and recreation facilities when not in use, it is important to consider these sites as components of the community's overall open space network. Because of this, a spatial analysis of the service area of local public schools was also performed.

The results of this analysis are nearly the opposite of the park spatial analysis. In the case of the schools, the southwest, central and east portions of the City (Planning Areas 1, 3 and 4) are among the best served, while the northern and northeast portions (Planning Areas 5 and 6) are not served. Planning Area 2 appears well served in both analyses.

While this analysis would appear to correct the deficiencies noted in the park analysis, this is only partially true. As the school sites are only available at limited times and not under control of the City, they cannot be considered to be full components of the local park network unless they can be secured through lease and joint-use agreements with the school district.

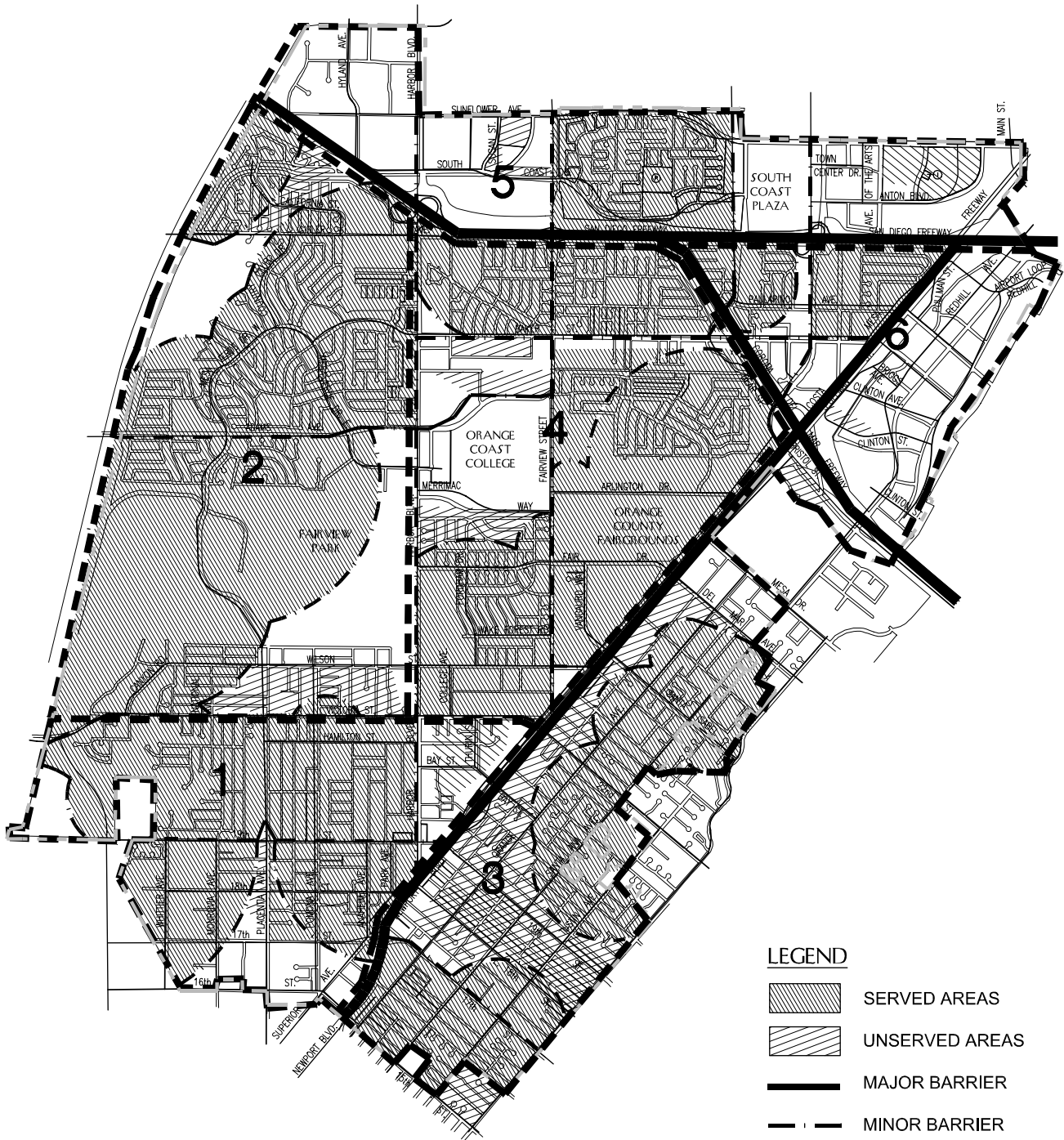
### **VACANT LAND ANALYSIS**

Vacant land has the best potential for meeting local park and recreation needs. However, in a developed community such as Costa Mesa, this potential is constrained by the size, location and availability of suitable parcels. This is particularly significant in Costa Mesa because only 3 percent of the City is vacant land or not already included in the inventory of parkland (undeveloped portions of Fairview and Talbert/Fairview Parks).

While the prime opportunities for new park sites are residential parcels, commercial or industrial sites may have potential for specialized or intensely-developed active recreation facilities.

The majority of remaining vacant land is located north of the San Diego Freeway in the Segerstrom Home Ranch and Sakioka Farms properties. Together, these land holdings account for 76 percent (182.28 acres) of the total inventory (240.03 acres) of vacant land.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREAS WITH PARK SERVICE



Source: Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan,  
Figure 3, City of Costa Mesa, January 1996

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EXHIBIT OSR-2

With just a few exceptions, the inventory of vacant residential land consists of scattered sites of 6,000 to 8,000 square-feet. The City owns two sets of contiguous properties on Del Mar; one of which contains 37,883 square-feet. This site (150 - 170 Del Mar) has been designated as a community garden. The 1.04-acre Community Garden consists of 60 individual lots for use by Costa Mesa residents. Currently, the garden has a waiting list for participation on a year round basis. The second site is proposed for development as a Habitat for Humanity home.

The City also owns surplus property associated with the Victoria Street widening. In 1992, the Engineering Division proposed that the contiguous sites at 2150 Maple, and 570 and 574 Victoria (14,960 sq.ft.), be retained as a pocket park site. Pursuant to direction from the Costa Mesa City Council in 1998, these sites have been reserved as open space for future development as a pocket park. This area consists of approximately 0.5 acres of park site.

The sites with the highest potential for park or active recreation sites remain the larger land holdings in north Costa Mesa.

## **SURPLUS AND POTENTIAL SURPLUS SCHOOL SITE ANALYSIS**

One of the most significant actions which have taken place since the preparation of a 1994 Master Plan Study was direction from the Newport-Mesa Unified School District Board of Education to consider a number of existing school sites for potential sale or lease as surplus property. Since these sites are publicly-owned and are already used to some degree for recreation facilities and activities, they can provide opportunities for future park or active recreation facility sites. The sites include Balearic Center (9.97 acres), Mesa Verde School (10.18 acres), Monte Vista/Black Bay High School (6.25 acres), Lindbergh School (9.2 acres) and Harper Administrative Services Center (9.11 acres).

## **RECREATION PROGRAMMING NEEDS**

The City currently offers a variety of youth, adult and senior programs, and team sports activities. Most of these programs are offered at the four community centers and two active community parks. Youth activities are also offered at school district facilities. Recreation programming will have to be expanded over time as the population grows. This in turn will lead to increased demand for use of facilities to accommodate these programs. As new programs are introduced, the current facilities may not be sufficient and could constrain the amount of new programming and sports activities the City can introduce. Future program facility needs will have to be coordinated with school site/college facility development. Specific program-related facility needs include the provision of additional active sports fields for youth programming and organized sports leagues.

The Farm Soccer Complex is an 18-acre area located within Planning Area 4. This sports park has 6 playing fields, two of which are lighted. This area will be used for soccer and flag football. In addition, the complex includes restrooms, a concession stand and a storage area for maintenance equipment.

Currently, there are proposed Construction Plans for a Skateboard Park at the southeast corner of Charle Street and Hamilton Street. The Skateboard Park is estimated to be completed in July 2001.

## RECREATION FACILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Identifying long-term facility needs establishes a framework within which the City can determine the community facility goals and how, when, and where facility goals can be met. The need for each major facility type which should be provided at buildout can be determined by comparing what's currently provided with the assessment of community facility needs as determined by relevant factors. The factors include evaluating the level of current and future facility demand by analyzing the current use of existing facilities and identifying, as best as possible, unmet needs. The Master Plan Study identified the following facility requirements to meet future needs: lighted ball fields, basketball courts, swimming pool, and volleyball courts. Table OSR-4 provides a breakdown of recreation facility community needs.

**TABLE OSR-4  
RECREATION FACILITY COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Facility	No.	Acreage
50-Meter Swimming Pool	1	0.75 acre
Baseball Fields, Lighted (12 and under)	2	3.00 acres
Softball Fields, Lighted	3	4.50 acres
1/2 Basketball Court	9	0.64 acre
Volleyball Courts	5	0.25 acre
Gymnasium Building	1	0.50 acre
<b>Total:</b>		<b>9.64 acres</b>

## ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITY SITING ANALYSIS

As part of the Master Plan preparation, a land use analysis was conducted to identify potential locations for active recreation facilities within the City of Costa Mesa.

The analysis provides few opportunities for new development as the City is near buildout, but the following sites were identified as having potential available acreage. There are additional small parcels distributed throughout the City but they are too small for developing any suitable facilities and not economically feasible.

- ◆ Fairview Park
- ◆ Sakioka Farms Property
- ◆ Segerstrom Home Ranch
- ◆ Orange Coast College
- ◆ Costa Mesa High School
- ◆ Estancia High School
- ◆ Harper School
- ◆ Lindbergh School
- ◆ Mesa Verde School
- ◆ Monte Vista School
- ◆ Wilson School
- ◆ Fairview Developmental Center

## **COSTA MESA RIVER - BAY TRAIL**

Located on the west and east sides of Costa Mesa are two very unique water resources which are important recreation amenities for the residents of Costa Mesa. A trail linkage across the town, utilizing sites within the Institutional Corridor, would provide a linear route for recreation and transportation purposes between the two bordering amenities. This proposal is in support of the Master Plan of Bikeways where many of the links are already existing. The establishment of a continuous connection will involve the identification of existing trails and lanes along the route and a series of signage and markings provided to identify the Trail.

- ◆ A link should be planned during the development of Fairview Park and the County's North Talbert/Fairview Regional Park which will make the connection between the City trail system and the Santa Ana River Trail. The City will have to coordinate with the County in the planning of the regional park to ensure the implementation of a trail linkage.
- ◆ The crossing at Costa Mesa Freeway should be addressed to ensure a safe crossing between the east and west sides of the City.
- ◆ The only location where a trail or bike lane does not yet exist along this route is along Del Mar Avenue and Fair Drive. The road is wide and could accommodate a bicycle lane. When planning this link, the City should design the trail to have some separation from the road through the use of a planting strip and to provide a landscape buffer between it and the bordering residents. The segment will then serve to link the corridor to an existing trail in Newport Beach and the Newport Bay.

The City should investigate the opportunities for obtaining easements or rights-of-way along the properties that border the planned route of the River-Bay Trail. There may be some method to get portions of the trail away from the road. However, if this is not possible along Del Mar/University Drive, on-street parking will need to be removed to provide on-street bike lanes.

## **10.5 DESCRIPTION OF ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

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The Action Plan subsection of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan contains specific recommendations to improve existing neighborhood and community parks and joint-use active recreation facilities and recommendations for potential new neighborhood park sites.

In addition to the recommended improvements to existing sites and facilities, new park and recreation sites will be needed to meet the long-term park, recreation and open space needs to the community.

An estimate of population to park ratios has been conducted, by planning area, to evaluate deficiencies in the City's allocation of parkland. Table OSR-5, *Existing Park/Population Ratios*, indicates these estimated ratios.

**TABLE OSR-5  
EXISTING PARK/POPULATION RATIOS**

Planning Area	Population <sup>1</sup>	Existing Parkland <sup>2</sup>	Park/Population Ratio
Planning Area 1	21,456	56.58 ac.	2.63/1,000
Planning Area 2	39,735	246.73 ac.	2.26/1,000
Planning Area 3	20,619	11.62 ac.	0.563/1,000
Planning Area 4	26,321	80.32 ac.	3.05/1,000
Planning Area 5	4,614	16.42 ac.	3.55/1,000
Planning Area 6	5,669	9.18 ac.	1.61/1,000
<b>Notes:</b>			
1 Population figures are estimates based on existing census boundaries. Some variation may occur due to differences between tract boundaries and planning area boundaries.			
2 Parkland figures based on information contained in City of Costa Mesa Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.			
Source: City of Costa Mesa Development Service Department, 2000.			

## **PLANNING AREA 1**

Planning Area 1 is unique in a number of ways. First, it is the location of major public open space features including Canyon Community Park and the Talbert Regional Park and immediately adjacent to Fairview Community Park. However, these facilities are located along the easternmost boundary of the area, leaving the balance poorly served for neighborhood park service. Secondly, the area is the most densely populated and highly developed in the City, leaving very limited opportunities for sites to fulfill this service deficiency.

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Study recommended development of the City-owned property at the southeast corner of Charle Street and Hamilton Street as a neighborhood pocket park. Although limited in size (approximately 1/2 acre), the pocket park can provide park service to the surrounding high-density neighborhood. Per City Council direction this area has been designated to be developed as a skateboard park.

Planning area 1 includes the previously identified surplus properties associated with the Victoria Street widening. There are three contiguous sites that the City Council has reserved for future use as a pocket park.

Additional opportunities to increase service are Wilson School and Rea School. Although too small to be considered isolated, active recreation centers, these sites are suitable for the provision of neighborhood park facilities. In 1999, City Council authorized staff to negotiate use of 0.68 acres of Rea School as a neighborhood park.

## **PLANNING AREA 2**

Planning Area 2 is currently well served and exceeds the park-to-population standard for neighborhood and community parks. As such, no new park sites have been identified. However, the City should consider continued availability of Balearic Center as a community center and active recreation fields.

### **PLANNING AREA 3**

Planning Area 3 is similar to Area 1 in that it is an older neighborhood which is nearly fully developed without an adequate neighborhood park system. One advantage that the eastside has is the availability of existing school sites to augment the local park network and the potential availability of three surplus school sites. It is also home to the previously identified Community Garden.

To meet the neighborhood park service needs of the area, the City should consider acquiring, through purchase or long-term lease agreements, all or a part of at least two of the surplus or potential surplus sites. It is recommended that these sites encompass at least two to three acres each. Lindbergh School is considered a high priority because of the existing one-acre neighborhood park and the permanent open space provided by the Water District's underground reservoir. Harper Administrative Center offers the same advantage in terms of the existing neighborhood park. Monte Vista/Back Bay High School is advantageous in that it has the greatest potential to expand service to a currently unserved area.

### **PLANNING AREA 4**

Planning Area 4 is the third area with deficient neighborhood parkland. However, with recent acquisition and development of the Costa Mesa High School Farm Site this area's deficiency has been reduced. The new Farm Sports Complex includes a total of six soccer fields, four of which are lighted and two of which are unlighted.

### **PLANNING AREA 5**

Planning Area 5 has a surplus of neighborhood parkland in Wakeham and Wimbledon Parks. The more urbanized residential development east of Town Center is served by private on-site recreation facilities and The Lakes open space easements. However, with the development of the Sakioka Farms residential site, this area is expected to have the highest potential for new residential development, up to 1,411 dwelling units and 2,920 population.

As noted in the Active Recreation Facility Siting Analysis, a new five-acre neighborhood park would meet the park needs of the future residents. It is recommended that this park be developed with turf areas for informal games, play equipment and picnic areas. No acquisition costs have been assumed for this site as it will be obtained as a part of the park dedication requirements for the future residential development. Improvement costs are estimated at \$600,000. If improved by the developer, these costs will be credited against the remaining park in-lieu fee balance for the project.

### **ACTION PLAN/PRIORITIES**

Realization of the recommendations of the 1996 Master Plan (amended in 1999) depends upon a solid implementation plan. Alternative funding mechanisms may include park in-lieu fees, impact fees, general fund, dedication, grants, general obligation bonds and certificates of participation.

The City of Costa Mesa intends to provide more park and recreation facilities to serve the new residents anticipated between now and buildout. The City has not met all of its current population's needs, therefore, additional parks and facilities

must be provided to serve existing constituents. Since not all of the needs can be addressed at once, priorities must be established.

During the first four years of a 20-year capital improvement program, priority was given to developing youth athletic fields on joint-use recreation facilities at local schools and replacement of tot lot equipment at community and neighborhood parks.

The highest priority is given to park facilities that serve the unmet needs of existing residents. A majority of this budget is allocated towards athletic facility development at parks and joint-use recreation facilities at local schools. Emphasis is given to facilities that serve individual and team sports, such as softball, baseball, basketball and soccer. Some facility improvements at existing neighborhood parks are recommended during this phase, as well as improvements to Balearic Community Center and implementation of the skateboard park at Charle and Hamilton.

Priority 2 provides for a 50-meter swimming pool to be developed under a joint-use agreement. A gymnasium facility, one lighted softball field, two youth baseball fields, and one lighted soccer field will also be phased in. Neighborhood parks continue to be improved, and a new neighborhood park on the Sakioka site north of the I-405 will be developed. This last priority provides for minor improvements to existing neighborhood parks.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is designed as a road map to guide future improvements to the City's local park and recreation system. It is designed to address current system deficiencies and to meet the long-term community's needs through buildout of the City's 2000 General Plan. As conditions change over time, the Master Plan should be viewed as a living document which must be continually monitored and evaluated. This review should occur with the annual review of the 2000 General Plan and/or budget process.

One of the key recommendations for funding the identified improvements is a combination of Quimby Act park in-lieu fees and development impact fees. As the Master Plan suggests, the current Quimby in-lieu fee ordinance and fee schedule should be amended to reflect the shift in emphasis from a land acquisition based fee to a fee based on the recommended capital improvement program. At the same time, the City should proceed with the prerequisite study to establish an impact fee for those projects not covered by the provisions of the Quimby Act. The establishment of such a fee program was adopted as a Community Objective by City Council during its 1995-96 budget adoption process.

With the passage of Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000 (Proposition 12), the City of Costa Mesa qualifies for additional funding for parks, coastal and recreation projects. Proposition 12 include approximately \$827 million in potential funding to local governments for a wide range of per capita and competitive parks and recreation program grants. The bonds are paid off from a General Fund revenue (largely income, sales, and other taxes). Bonds will be sold gradually, as state and local agencies are prepared to spend the money. It may take five or more years to sell all the bonds. Once the bonds are sold, they are paid off over a long period of time, usually 20 years.



## 10.6 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

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The goals, objectives, and policies of the Costa Mesa 2000 General Plan that address recreation and open space are as follows:

### **GOAL OSR-1: ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

It is the goal of the City of Costa Mesa to provide its citizens with a high quality environment through the development of recreation resources, and the preservation of open space.

**Objective OSR-1A.** Preserve the City's open space lands and provide additional community and neighborhood parkland in conjunction with future population increases to provide adequate recreational opportunities and relief from the pressures of urban development.

- OSR-1A.1 Provide a minimum of 5.76 acres of permanent public open space (consisting of 4.26 acres of neighborhood and community parks and 1.5 acres in school yards) for every 1,000 residents.
- OSR-1A.2 Provide maximum visibility and accessibility for future public parks by locating such facilities adjacent to existing or planned public streets.
- OSR-1A.3 Encourage the acquisition of land for neighborhood or community parks for active recreational use.
- OSR-1A.4 To the extent legally possible, require other local, regional, State, or Federal agencies to maintain an adequate inventory of open space lands within Costa Mesa.
- OSR-1A.5 Encourage, through development rights transfers or other incentives, the development of private permanent open space, and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the City's residents.
- OSR-1A.6 Encourage, through open space easements, development rights transfers or acquisition, zoning regulations, or other incentives, the long-term maintenance of existing open space lands.
- OSR-1A.7 Require, through development standards and planned development review criteria, the integration of open space uses (plazas, courtyards, landscaped areas, etc.) into major commercial and industrial development or redevelopment projects.
- OSR-1A.8 Continue to require, through development standards, the integration of open space and recreational uses and facilities into all multiple-family residential projects.
- OSR-1A.9 Review the possibility of incorporating an Arts in Public Places program in City parks.
- OSR-1A.10 Strongly encourage improved maintenance of City and school district facilities used for recreation and organized sports

activities. Strongly support recreation programs that benefit the youth of the community.

OSR-1A.11 Retain all existing open space in Lions Park.

OSR-1A.12 Preserve and enhance existing wetlands areas.

OSR-1A.13 Encourage the preservation of views of coastal resources from City and County parkland and public streets within Costa Mesa.

OSR-1A.14 Through continued implementation of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, actively pursue the acquisition and development of pocket and neighborhood parks within park deficient areas.

OSR-1A.15 Update the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan on a regular basis.

OSR-1A.16 Ensure that parks and recreation facilities are developed with facilities appropriate to all ages, including athletic fields, active play areas, passive open space, tot lots, and picnic areas.